

REMARKS

Claims 1-14

Claim 1 is an independent claim, from which claims 2-14 ultimately depend. Claims 1-7 and 11-14 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ezumi (7,197,329). Claims 8-10 have been objected to as containing allowable subject matter, but which ultimately depend from a rejected base independent claim, claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that as originally presented, claim 1 is patentable over Ezumi. Therefore, claims 2-14 are patentable at least because they depend from a patentable base independent claim, claim 1.

Applicant submits that several aspects of claim 1 are not suggested in view of Ezumi. Therefore, insofar as the entirety of the invention as claimed in claim 1 is not suggested in view of Ezumi, Ezumi does not render claim 1 *prima facie* obvious and unpatentable under 35 USC 103(a). A claimed invention has to be considered “as a whole” (MPEP sec. 2141.02.I.). “Distilling an invention down to the ‘gist’ or ‘thrust’ of an invention disregards the requirement of analyzing the subject matter ‘as a whole.’” (MPEP sec 2141.02.II., citing *W.L. Gore & Associates, Inc. v. Garlock, Inc.*, 721 F.2d 1540, 220 USPQ 303 (Fed. Cir. 1983)) “All words in a claim must be considered in judging the patentability of that claim against the prior art.” (Id., citing *In re Wilson*, 424 F.2d 1382, 1385, 165 USPQ 494, 496 (CCPA 1970)) Each of the aspects of claim 1 that are not suggested in view of Ezumi is now discussed in detail.

(1) *Each display module comprising at least one connector*

Claim 1 recites that *each* display module comprises “at least one connector” disposed in the display module. The Examiner has identified in Ezumi the wire communication line 130, which connects the telephone base station 100 to a public telephone line (see col. 6, ll. 54-55), as the connector of the telephone base station 100, and thus the connector of the display 101 that corresponds to one of the display modules of claim 1. However, the Examiner has not identified any component in Ezumi that corresponds to the connector of the cordless telephone handset 110, and thus to the connector of the display 111 that corresponds to another of the display modules of claim 1.

Applicant further notes that Ezumi in fact does not suggest the cordless telephone handset 110 having a wire communication line 130 like the telephone base station 100 does. This makes sense, because the purpose of a cordless telephone handset 110 is of course that you do not have to be tethered by a physical wire to make telephone calls. Rather, the idea is that just the telephone base station 100 is physically connected to a public telephone line, and the base station 100 wirelessly communicates with the cordless telephone handset 110. Therefore, in contradistinction to the claimed invention, *each* display module does *not* comprise at least one connector as suggested by Ezumi; in particular, the display 111 of the cordless telephone handset 110 does not comprise a connector. For just this reason, claim 1 is patentable over Ezumi.

(2) Connector to receive power from and/or provide power to an adjacent display module

Claim 1 recites that each display module comprises at least one connector disposed in the display module, as noted above. Furthermore, the at least one connector is to “at least one of” receive power from and provide power to *a first adjacent display module*. Thus, the connector of a given display module is to receive power from and/or provide power to *another, adjacent display module*. The Examiner has stated that the wire communication line 130 in Ezumi that connects the telephone base station 100 to a public telephone line receives power because “it is inherent that the wired communication line is plugged into a power source.” (Office action, p. 3) While Applicant does not necessarily agree, it is noted that claim 1 does not just recite that the connector of a display module is to receive power and/or to provide power. Rather, claim 1 recites that the connector of a display module is to receive power from and/or provide power to *an adjacent display module*.

However, as suggested by Ezumi, the wire communications line 130 does not receive power from and/or provide power to *an adjacent display module*, in contradistinction to claim 1. Rather, the wire communications line 130 connects telephone base station 100, including the display 101, to a public telephone line, and not to the other display module as suggested by Ezumi, the cordless telephone handset 110 including the display 111. Therefore, the identified connector of the telephone base station 100 including the display 101 as suggested by Ezumi that corresponds to a display module of claim 1 does not receive power from or provide power to the cordless telephone handset 110 including the display 111 that corresponds to another display module of claim 1, in contradistinction to claim 1. For just this reason as well, claim 1 is patentable over Ezumi.

Claims 15-19

Claims 15-19 have been allowed, for which Applicant thanks the Examiner.

Claims 20-26

Claim 20 is an independent claim, from which claims 21-26 ultimately depend. Claims 20-26 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ezumi in view of Asano (6,636,181). Applicant submits that as originally presented, claim 20 is patentable over Ezumi in view of Asano. Therefore, claims 21-26 are patentable at least because they depend from a patentable base independent claim, claim 20.

Claim 20 recites the following claim language: (1) *each* display module comprising connectors; and, (2) the connectors to receive power from and/or provide power to an adjacent *display module*. This claim language of claim 20 is at least substantially similar to that of claim 1 that has been discussed above. Furthermore, in rejecting claim 20 over Ezumi in view of Asano, the Examiner has relied upon Ezumi in the same way in rejecting claim 1 over Ezumi alone. Insofar as Ezumi does not teach, disclose, or suggest the claim language for which it is being relied upon in the rejection of claim 20 over Ezumi in view of Asano, as has been discussed above in relation to claim 1, then Ezumi in view of Asano does not teach, disclose, or suggest all the claim language of claim 20.¹ This is because *all* the words of claim 20 have to be considered in judging its patentability against the prior art.

¹ Applicant parenthetically notes that the references are not being attacked individually herein. Rather, Applicant's argument is that the proffered combination of references does not teach, disclose, or suggest all the claim language of claim 20, such that the references in combination do not render claim 20 nonobvious. In arguing why the combination of references does not teach, disclose, or suggest all the claim language of claim 20, Applicant focuses on a particular reference, Ezumi, in the same way that the Examiner has done. Insofar as this particular reference does not teach, disclose, or suggest the aspects of claim 20 as relied upon by the Examiner, the combination of references as a whole cannot teach, disclose, or suggest claim 20 in its entirety.

Claims 27-37

Claim 27 is an independent claim, from which claims 28-37 ultimately depend. Claims 27-37 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ezumi in view of Asano. Applicant submits that as originally presented, claim 27 is patentable over Ezumi in view of Asano. Therefore, claims 28-37 are patentable at least because they depend from a patentable base independent claim, claim 27.

Claim 27 recites the following claim language: the connectors to receive power from and/or provide power to an *adjacent display module*. This claim language of claim 27 is at least substantially similar to that of claim 1 that has been discussed above. Furthermore, in rejecting claim 27 over Ezumi in view of Asano, the Examiner has relied upon Ezumi in the same way in rejecting claim 1 over Ezumi alone. Therefore, insofar as Ezumi does not teach, disclose, or suggest the claim language for which it is being relied upon in the rejection of claim 27 over Ezumi in view of Asano, as has been discussed above in relation to claim 1, then Ezumi in view of Asano does not teach, disclose, or suggest all the claim language of claim 27. This is because *all* the words of claim 27 have to be considered in judging its patentability against the prior art.

Claims 38-50

Claim 38 is an independent claim, from which claims 39-50 ultimately depend. Claims 38-50 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ezumi in view of Asano. Applicant submits that as originally presented, claim 38 is patentable over Ezumi in view of Asano. Therefore, claims 39-50 are patentable at least because they depend from a patentable base independent claim, claim 28.

Claim 38 recites the following claim language: the display modules connectable to one another by connectors to *distribute power among the display modules*. This claim language of claim 38 is similar to that of claim 1 that has been discussed above. Specifically, connectors that distribute power among the display modules as in claim 38 are akin to connectors of the display

modules providing power to and/or receiving power from adjacent display modules as in claim 1 for the purposes of the present rejection, because this language of claim 1 provides for the distribution of power as recited in claim 38. In rejecting claim 38 over Ezumi in view of Asano, the Examiner has relied upon Ezumi in the same way in rejecting claim 1 over Ezumi alone. Therefore, insofar as Ezumi does not teach, disclose, or suggest the claim language for which it is being relied upon in the rejection of claim 38 over Ezumi in view of Asano, as has been discussed above in relation to claim 1, then Ezumi in view of Asano does not teach, disclose, or suggest all the claim language of claim 38. This is because *all* the words of claim 38 have to be considered in judging its patentability against the prior art.

Claim 51

Claim 51 is an independent claim that has been rejected as being unpatentable under 35 USC 103(a) over Ezumi. Applicant respectfully submits that as originally presented, claim 51 is patentable over Ezumi. Claim 51 recites the following claim language: wherein power is distributed among the (interlocking) means. This claim language of claim 51 is similar to the power distribution claim language of claim 38. Therefore, claim 51 is patentable over Ezumi for at least the same reasons that claim 38 is patentable over Ezumi, as has been discussed above in relation to claim 38.

Claims 52-57

Claim 52 is an independent claim, from which claims 53-57 ultimately depend. Claim 52 has been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ezumi. Claims 53-57 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ezumi in view of Asano. Applicant submits that as originally presented, claim 52 is patentable over Ezumi. Therefore, claims 53-57 are patentable at least because they depend from a patentable base independent claim, claim 52.

Claim 52 has been amended to recite following claim language: *distributing power* among the plurality of interlockable display modules of the display. This claim language of claim 52 is similar to that of claim 38. Therefore, claim 52 is patentable over Ezumi for at least the same reasons that claim 38 is patentable over Ezumi, as has been discussed above in relation to claim 38.

Claims 58-60

Claim 58 is an independent claim, from which claims 59 and 60 ultimately depend. Claims 58-60 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ezumi in view of Asano. Applicant submits that as originally presented, claim 58 is patentable over Ezumi in view of Asano. Therefore, claims 59 and 60 are patentable at least because they depend from a patentable base independent claim, claim 58.

Claim 58 recites the following claim language: (1) *each* display module comprising connectors; and, (2) the connectors to receive power from and/or provide power to adjacent *display modules*. This claim language of claim 58 is at least substantially similar to that of claim 1 that has been discussed above. Furthermore, in rejecting claim 58 over Ezumi in view of Asano, the Examiner has relied upon Ezumi in the same way in rejecting claim 1 over Ezumi alone. Therefore, insofar as Ezumi does not teach, disclose, or suggest the claim language for which it is being relied upon in the rejection of claim 58 over Ezumi in view of Asano, as has been discussed above in relation to claim 1, then Ezumi in view of Asano does not teach, disclose, or suggest all the claim language of claim 58. This is because *all* the words of claim 58 have to be considered in judging its patentability against the prior art.

Conclusion

Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the pending claims in condition for allowance, and request that they so be allowed. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Mike Dryja, Applicants' Attorney, at 425-427-5094, so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible. For these reasons, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Date

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